What Is Claimed Is:

    1.   A method for managing a business process, comprising the steps of:

executing a business process that comprises an integrated set of applications that enable interactions between a plurality of entities; and

5   managing the execution of the business process using business commitment specifications that describe one or more business commitments among said entities, wherein the business commitments are defined using KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and wherein KPIs are defined using probe points.

10   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the business commitment specifications are described using XML (eXtensible Markup Language) syntax.

    3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of managing comprises the steps of:

15   monitoring a probe point associated with the business process;

determining a value of a KPI when a probe point, which is associated with the KPI, is activated; and

evaluating a business commitment associated with the KPI based on the determined value of the KPI to determine if the business commitment has been violated.

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    4.   The method of claim 3, wherein the step of determining a value of a KPI comprises determining the value of the KPI based on a value of at least one other KPI.

5.   The method of claim 3, wherein the step of determining a value of a KPI comprises invoking a function to determining the value of the KPI.

6.   The method of claim 3, wherein the step of determining a value of a KPI comprises determining the value of the KPI based on a value extracted from a probe point.

7.   The method of claim 3, wherein the step of evaluating a business commitment comprises evaluating a condition specified by the business commitment using the determined value of the KPI.

8.   The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of commencing an action if it is determined that the business commitment has been violated.

9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the step of commencing an action comprises providing notification of the violation to an entity associated with the business commitment.

10.   The method of claim 8, wherein the step of commencing an action comprises invoking a management directive to alter the execution of the business process.

11.   A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a

program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for managing

a business process, the method steps comprising:

executing a business process that comprises an integrated set of applications that

5   enable interactions between a plurality of entities; and

managing the execution of the business process using business commitment

specifications that describe one or more business commitments among said entities,

wherein the business commitments are defined using KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)

and wherein KPIs are defined using probe points.

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12.   The program storage device of claim 11, wherein the business

commitment specifications are described using XML (eXtensible Markup Language)

syntax.

15   13.   The program storage device of claim 11, wherein the instructions for

managing comprise instructions for performing the steps of:

monitoring a probe point associated with the business process;

determining a value of a KPI when a probe point, which is associated with the

KPI, is activated; and

20   evaluating a business commitment associated with the KPI based on the

determined value of the KPI to determine if the business commitment has been violated.

14. The program storage device of claim 13, wherein the instructions for determining a value of a KPI comprise instructions for determining the value of the KPI based on a value of at least one other KPI.

5   15. The program storage device of claim 13, wherein the instructions for determining a value of a KPI comprise instructions for invoking a function to determine the value of the KPI.

16. The program storage device of claim 13, wherein the instructions for

10   determining a value of a KPI comprise instructions for determining the value of the KPI based on a value extracted from a probe point.

17. The program storage device of claim 13, wherein the instructions for evaluating a business commitment comprise instructions for evaluating a condition

15   specified by the business commitment using the determined value of the KPI.

18. The program storage device of claim 13, further comprising instructions for commencing an action if it is determined that the business commitment has been violated.

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19. The program storage device of claim 18, wherein the instructions for commencing an action comprise instructions for providing notification of the violation to an entity associated with the business commitment.

20.   The program storage device of claim 18, wherein the instructions for commencing an action comprise instructions for invoking a management directive to alter the execution of the business process.

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21.   A model for providing business process management, wherein the model is described using business commitment specifications that globally describe business relationships between a plurality of entities associated with a dynamic business process.

10   22.   The model of claim 21, wherein the model is used for monitoring and controlling business-level SLAs (service level agreements) among the entities based on specified business commitments.

23.   The model of claim 22, wherein the business commitments are defined

15   using a KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and wherein KPIs are defined using probe points.

24.   The model of claim 21, wherein the plurality of entities comprises external and internal parties associated with a business process.

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25.   The model of claim 21, wherein the business commitments are described using XML (eXtensible Markup Language) syntax.

26.   A method for monitoring and controlling business level SLAs (service level agreements) via probe points, comprising the steps of:

providing at least one host computer adapted to have a business process commitment language (BPCL) configurator;

5   operating the BPCL configurator to configure an actuator for implementing management directives;

operating the BPCL configurator to configure a condition evaluator for evaluating logical conditions; and

operating the BPCL configurator to configure a key performance indicator (KPI)

10   calculator for calculating a KPI value, wherein the at least one host computer determines the probe points of a business process for controlling SLAs based upon business directives.

27.   The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of operating the

15   BPCL configurator to configure an actuator for providing notification of SLA violations.

28.   The method of claim 26, wherein the SLAs are based on business commitments that are globally modeled for a plurality of entities.

20   29.   The method of claim 26, wherein BPCL is described using XML syntax.

30. A system for providing business process management, comprising:

build-time components for generating documents that describe business

relationships between a plurality of entities associated with a dynamic business process;

and

5   run-time components for processing specifications of the documents to provide

business level SLA (service level agreement) management of the dynamic business

process.

31. The system of claim 30, wherein the build-time components comprise a

10   tool for authoring BPCL (business process commitment Language) documents that

specify relationships between probe points, KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and

business commitments, and wherein the run-time components comprise components for

monitoring an controlling business level SLAs using specifications of a BPCL document.

15   32. The system of claim 31, wherein the development tool comprises an

Eclipse-based visual development tool that displays a hierarchical relationship among

probe points, KPIs and business commitments of a BPCL document.

33. The system of claim 31, wherein the run-time components comprise a

20   BPCL Configurator that allows a dynamic change to a BPCL document and

automatically propagates the changes to the run-time components.

34.   The system of claim 33, wherein the run-time components comprise a KPI calculator for determining KPI values.

35.   The system of claim 34, wherein the run-time components comprise a condition evaluator for evaluating logical conditions of business commitments using the KPI values.

36.   The system of claim 34, wherein the run-time components comprise an evaluation trigger that determines a trigger to invoke the condition evaluator, wherein the trigger is alarm-based or event-based, wherein instructions for an alarm-based trigger are provided by the BPCL configurator when reading a BPCL document.

37.   The system of claim 34, wherein the run-time components comprise an actuator for sending generic notifications or invoking management directives that can alter the execution of the business process.

38.   The system of claim 31, further comprising means for automatically detecting a dependency between probe points, KPIs and business commitments, and for determining KPIs and business commitments that are affected by unavailable probe points.